United Nations A/73/318

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 August 2018
English
Original: Spanish

Seventy-third session
Item 117 (d) of the provisional agenda*
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 6 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that Uruguay has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2019–2021 at the elections to be held on 12 October 2018.

In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 60/251, I have the honour to transmit herewith the voluntary pledges of Uruguay, reaffirming its commitment to respect, protect and promote human rights (see annex).

The candidature of Uruguay to the Human Rights Council is a testament to its willingness to actively support and defend the United Nations human rights system, which is at the heart of the country's domestic and foreign policies.

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 6 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Uruguay to the Human Rights Council, 2019–2021

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

1. Uruguay has presented it candidature for membership of the Human Rights Council for the term 2019–2021. Uruguay has been actively involved with the Council since its inception. In that context, it has promoted the adoption of a solid and ambitious legal framework for the fulfilment of the Council's mandate and has helped to make the Council a stronger institution by consistently participating in its work and making constructive contributions aimed at raising standards of protection and strengthening the Council's mechanisms for action. The aspiration to become a member of the Council is a natural result of the principles and objectives of Uruguayan foreign policy.

2. The coherent and active work of Uruguay at the international level, in both the Human Rights Council and the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights, has been based on the basic principles of the universality, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights, adherence to international law, respect for the principle of the sovereignty of States, and the centrality of human beings as subjects of law.

3. Those principles have consistently underpinned the participation of Uruguay in the Council, which it has undertaken with a view to enhancing the international rights agenda, raise standards of protection and enhance the effectiveness of monitoring bodies.

4. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, Uruguay makes the following voluntary pledges:

Promotion and protection of human rights at the international level

- To continue to contribute to the strengthening of the universal system for the promotion and protection of human rights through an approach that fosters cooperation among States and the effectiveness of the various mechanisms of the system.
- To continue to support the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, including through the provision of non-earmarked financial resources, which will enable the Office to more effectively fulfil its growing number of mandates from States and strengthen its ability to provide valuable technical cooperation to States.
- To keep updating the Uruguayan common core document and submitting national reports to the various treaty bodies, which will be prepared in consultation with the National Human Rights Institution and the Office of the Ombudsman and with civil society, and with the participation of the relevant government actors.
- To promote a more rational, objective and non-selective use of the Council's special procedures and mandates, which will involve improving the Council's working methods.

- To maintain the standing invitation extended by Uruguay in 2005 to all the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, and to provide the necessary facilitation to enable such visits to be conducted without delays or obstacles.
- To continue to promote dialogue, negotiation and consensus-building as pillars of the working methods of the Human Rights Council. The cooperative and non-confrontational approach to dealing with human rights issues must be strengthened.
- To continue to promote an objective, non-selective and non-discriminatory approach, with the understanding that all human rights, be they civil, cultural, economic, political or social, including the right to development, are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing.
- To continue to promote the full participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in the work of the Human Rights Council, working to prevent reprisals against those who cooperate or seek to cooperate with the mechanisms of the Council, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and Human Rights Council resolution 16/21.
- To continue to work to improve the functioning and effectiveness of the universal periodic review as a fundamental and irreplaceable mechanism of the Council for the fulfilment of its mandate. In that connection, Uruguay pledges to submit its third national report and to continue to participate actively in all country reviews by making recommendations aimed at promoting the strengthening of human rights in the country concerned in an objective and non-selective manner. Uruguay voluntarily submitted its midterm report in 2016.

5. Uruguay hopes to use a new term on the Council to continue to contribute to the achievement of these objectives while highlighting the invaluable role of negotiation and consensus-building, which are the ideal means to make the Council a stronger institution that reflects the diversity and universality of human rights and the shared commitment to protect those rights and prevent them from being undermined.

Promotion and protection of human rights at the national level

- To adopt a protocol of action for the National Human Rights Institution and the Honorary Commission against Racism, Xenophobia and All Other Forms of Discrimination to respond to complaints or petitions concerning cases of racism, xenophobia or any other form of discrimination, to ensure that action can be taken as swiftly as possible against discriminatory behaviour. This will help prevent the consolidation of conflicts and, most importantly, minimize their consequences for the affected persons.
- To expand measures to achieve gender equality and prevent and eradicate gender-based violence, and to adopt the draft comprehensive legislation on human trafficking.
- To fully implement the programme to care for children in street situations, in line with general comment No. 21 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- To expand measures aimed at combating racial discrimination, taking advantage of the momentum created by the activities being undertaken as part of the International Decade for People of African Descent.
- To continue to make efforts to ensure the full realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of Uruguayan society, in particular combating poverty.

- To establish an independent mechanism to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in accordance with article 33 (2) of the Convention.
- To strengthen monitoring and compliance mechanisms, and to improve access to justice and rights protection for the most vulnerable groups.
- To continue to expand human rights training programmes for civil servants.
- To improve inter-agency care for refugees and migrants.
- To strengthen the national follow-up mechanism for recommendations and observations, which was established in 2016.
- To consolidate the civil society dialogue and consultation system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a tool to facilitate dialogue with civil society and the involvement of civil society in foreign policy decisions.